

# The Spirit of Democracy.

"PRINCIPLES AND MEASURES, AND MEN THAT WILL CARRY THOSE PRINCIPLES AND MEASURES INTO EFFECT."

BY JAMES R. MORRIS.

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## THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY

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BY J. R. MORRIS.

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 1844.

### RHODE ISLAND—THOMAS W. DORR AND HENRY CLAY.

We have thought that we could not at this time better employ a portion of our paper, than by giving our readers a short history of the Rhode Island difficulties. For this purpose we give the succinct statement of Mr. McClelland of Illinois, made to the lower House of Congress at the last session. We give his statement for the reason, that from his locality it may be presumed, that he would be more unbiased, than those immediately concerned in the transaction.

Mr. McClelland says:

"In 1663, Charles II, King of England, granted the charter under which the late government of Rhode Island was organized. He granted it, according to its terms, to certain of his 'trustworthy and well-beloved subjects'; and, for the purpose of imparting life and motion to the corporation, appointed, of his 'royal will,' Benedict Arnold governor of the corporation; also, a lieutenant governor, and ten assistants, who together with a specified number of persons to be chosen periodically by the freemen of the company, were charged with the management of its business; for it was nothing more than a mere landed corporation.

"(Here Mr. Cranston asked what Benedict Arnold was referred to.)

"Mr. McC. said, not the one of revolutionary memory."

"The right of suffrage is restricted by the charter to such persons as the company, by their constituted authorities, shall admit to be members and freemen of the company. To none others, although required to pay taxes, and to do military duty, is permitted the right. This restriction of suffrage, together with the increase of population, had so widened the disproportion of the freemen and non-freemen, according to the classification of the people, that, in 1841, the general assembly was elected and controlled by a number of towns containing less than one-third of the population of the State. In some instances, the inequality was extreme; as, for example, the town of Portsmouth, with 1,700 inhabitants, elected the same number of representatives as the city of Providence with 23,172 inhabitants. Three agricultural towns, whose united population amounted to but 1,805, elected the same number of representatives as three other agricultural towns whose population amounted to 18,848. This inequality of representation and unjust and degrading restriction of suffrage, had been a cause of dissatisfaction and complaint for nearly forty years before open collision took place between the two parties. In 1811, a bill to extend the right of suffrage to all who paid taxes, or performed military duty, was passed by a democratic Senate, but was lost in a charist House of Representatives.

"In 1829-'34-'40, and '41, the people in various ways repeated their appeals to the charter authorities in favor of the extension of the right of suffrage and a free constitution, but in vain. Their supplications were not heard, but were treated with contempt. Despairing of all hope of obtaining justice at the hands of their oppressors, they finally elected a convention to do themselves what otherwise could not be done. In October, 1841, this convention met, and after making some progress in their business, adjourned to meet again in November after, when they finished their labors, and submitted the draft of a constitution to the people for their adoption or rejection. The vote of the people was accordingly taken upon it; and on the 12th of January, after the convention again met, when they proceeded to count the votes for and against the proposed constitution, the count showed the whole number of votes given in by American male citizens of full age, and permanent residence or home in the State, in favor of the adoption of this constitution, to be 13,944, being a majority of the whole number of American male citizens of full age and permanent residence or home in the State, of 4,746. They also declared that, of the whole number of voters, (13,944,) 4,959 were legally qualified freemen. Upon this result the convention proclaimed this constitution to be the paramount law of the State, and recommended the early nomination of officers under it.

"They also communicated the above result, together with a copy of the people's constitution, to the governor of the State; which, upon being laid before the general assembly, was rejected by a large majority.

"The people having thus framed for themselves a constitution, proceeded next to organize a government under it. For this purpose, they held a State convention at Providence in February, 1842, and nominated general, district, and county officers, for election on Monday, the 18th day of April 1842. The election took place, and a practical operative government was organized, with Thomas W. Dorr at the head as governor of the State.

"It is a fact to be observed in this connection, that the people's constitution was not only adopted by a majority of the whole voting population of the State, but also by a majority of those qualified to vote under the charter government.

"The majority of these, calculated upon the basis of the vote in the presidential election of 1840, which was the largest ever polled in the State, was 1,298.

"Whilst these events were transpiring on the part of the people, the charists, seeing that the force of public opinion was about to bear them down, resorted to a new device to avert their overthrow. After having previously proposed a con-

stitution themselves, for the adoption of a limited number of the people, they removed several of the restrictions imposed in connection with its adoption and finally, at an adjourned convention in February, 1842, upon a more enlarged basis of suffrage, submitted their constitution to those authorized to vote under it, to be voted for in March after—which was voted down; and in September, after, in pursuance of the call of the charter legislature, and under the constraint of martial law, held another convention to frame another constitution; the vote in favor of which, as appears by the election in November after, was 7,024—being 52 votes less than one-half of the number polled for the 'people's constitution,' and about one-third of the voting population of the State—the residue refusing under the circumstances, to vote at all.

"The existing government of Rhode Island is the same which was organized under this constitution. It is a government founded in usurpation, and supported by force; and although, in some respects, more liberal than the old charter government is yet liable to many strong objections. It is objectionable, among other things, because it regards the elective franchise as an incident of property, and not the right of man—because it sets the landholder over the chattel holder, and both these over the naturalized citizen."

This, so far as our knowledge extends, contains a true statement of the Rhode Island case. The following extract from Mr. Clay's Raleigh, North Carolina speech, written out by himself since his nomination for the presidency, shows which side of the question Mr. Clay takes. He says, "The whigs everywhere, I believe, to a man, have disapproved and condemned the movement of Dorr. It has been far otherwise with our opponents—Without meaning to assert that the whole of them countenanced and supported Dorr, every body knows that ALL the sympathy and encouragement which he has received have been among them." For one, we are willing to lay under this charge of Mr. Clay, of sympathizing with Mr. Dorr. We feel that his cause is the cause of the oppressed. There is one other statement in the remarks of Mr. Clay, with which we must find fault. He says, "Without consulting the established government and the public authorities, he [Dorr] undertook to bent up for recruits, to hold irregular elections, at which persons qualified and unqualified, dead and living, were pretended to have voted; and thus securing a heterogeneous majority, he proceeded to form a new constitution and to set up a new government."

Now it is well known by all acquainted with the affairs of Rhode Island, and Mr. Clay cannot be presumed to be ignorant of it, that after the adoption of the "people's constitution," a Mr. Atwell of the Rhode Island legislature, moved to have a committee appointed to investigate the polls, and to ascertain if a majority of the electors of the State had not voted for the people's constitution. The vote upon this motion stood—ayes 11, noes 57; thereby branding as false the charge that "dead men and unqualified voters were pretended to have voted," as Mr. Clay says. If dead men and unqualified voters were pretended to have voted, why did not the legislature appoint the committee as Mr. Atwell and the friends of Mr. Dorr wished, and purge the polls? No, they knew too well what would be the result. They knew that the result of the investigation would show, that no man voted, who if he had lived in the State of Ohio, would not have been entitled to vote under our laws. The investigation would have been easy, for the votes given in favor of the people's constitution had written upon the back of each the name of the voter who gave it; and they were offered to the legislature for inspection. Every thing was done by the people, to show that in all this matter they had acted openly and honorably. But they were met with scorn and vituperation. Such is the state of that transaction which Henry Clay has so falsified. But it comes well from him; it is perfectly consonant with the rest of his life. The following is the extract from Mr. Clay's speech referred to:

"In intimate connection with this case [Michigan case] the subject of Dorrism may be noticed. Rhode Island had an existing government of long duration, under which her population had lived happily and prosperously. It had carried her triumphantly through the war of the revolution, and borne her into the Union as one of the original thirteen independent sovereign States. Under it the people of no State in the Union in proportion to her population had displayed more valor, patriotism, and enterprise. Dorr did not find his ambitious aspirations sufficiently gratified under this venerable government and he undertook to subvert it. Asserting the principle that every people have a right to alter, modify, and change their government whenever they think proper—an abstract principle, which, with cautious limitations, may be true—without consulting the established government and the public authorities, he undertook to heat up for recruits, to hold irregular elections, at which persons qualified and unqualified, dead and living, were pretended to have voted; and thus securing a heterogeneous majority, he proceeded to form a new constitution, and to set up a new government. In the mean time, the legitimate and regular government proceeded in operation, and prepared to sustain itself, and put down the insurrectionary proceeding.

"Dorr flew to arms and collected a military force as irregular and heterogeneous as his civil majority had been. But on the first approach of military force, on the part of the legitimate and regular government, Dorr took to his heels and ignominiously fled, leaving his motley confederates to fare as they might. Now, fellow-citizens, what has been the conduct of the two parties in respect to this insurrection, which at one time seemed to be so threatening? The whigs, everywhere, I believe to a man, have disapproved and condemned the movement of Dorr. It has been far otherwise with our opponents. Without meaning to assert that the whole of them countenanced and supported Dorr, every body knows that all the sympathy and

encouragement which he has received have been among them. And they have introduced the subject into the present House of Representatives.—We shall see what they will do with it. You can readily comprehend and feel what would be the effects and consequences of Dorrism here at the South, if Dorrism were predominant. Any unprincipled adventurer would have nothing to do but to collect around him a motley majority, black and white, aliens and citizens, young and old, male and female, overturn existing governments, and set up new ones, at his pleasure or caprice?—What earthly security for life, liberty, or property, would remain, if a proceeding so fraught with confusion, disorder, and insubordination, were tolerated and sanctioned?"

But the grand finale of all this is, that Thomas W. Dorr is tried for treason and found guilty.—The chief justice directed the clerk to ask the prisoner if he had any thing to say why sentence should not be pronounced. Mr. Dorr replied as follows:

The court have, through their officer, addressed to the defendant the usual question, whether we have anything to say why sentence should not now be pronounced upon him. I have something to say, which shall be brief and intelligible to the court, though it must be necessarily unavailing.—Without seeking to bring myself in controversy with the court, I am desirous to declare to you the plain truth.

I am bound, in duty to myself, to express to you my deep and solemn conviction that I have not received, at your hands, the fair trial by an impartial jury to which, by law and justice, I was entitled.

The trial has been permitted to take place in a county where, to say the least, it was doubtful whether the defendant could be tried according to the law of the State; and in a case of doubt like this, he ought to have had the benefit of it, especially as the trial here must be in a county to which the defendant was a stranger, in the midst of his most excited political opponents.

All but one of those freeholders (one hundred and eight in number) who were summoned here for the purpose of selecting a jury to try the defendant, were of the opposite party in the State, and were deliberately set against the defendant with the feelings of partisan hostility. The single democratic juror was set aside for having expressed an opinion. Of the drawn jurors, (sixteen in number,) two only were members of the democratic party; and one of them for cause, and the other for alleged cause, was removed.

Every one of the jury finally selected to try the defendant was, of course, a political opponent.

And even so constituted, the jury were not permitted to have the whole case presented to their consideration. They were not, (as in capital, if not in all criminal cases, they are entitled to be) permitted to judge of the law and of the fact. The defendant and his counsel were not permitted to argue to the jury any matter of law.

The court refused to hear the law argued to themselves, except on the question whether treason be and offence against a State or against the United States.

The court refused to permit the defendant to justify himself by proving the constitution, the election, and the authority under which he acted; or to permit him to produce the same proofs, in order to repel the charges of malicious and traitorous motives made in the indictment, and zealously urged against him by the counsel for the State.

By the charge of the judge, the jury were instructed that the only question which they had to try was, whether the defendant intended to do the acts which he performed—a question of capacity rather than of motives and intentions.

It is true that the jury were absent more than two hours; but not for deliberation. One of them was asked; immediately after the verdict was delivered, and the jury was discharged, whether they had been detained by any disagreement. He replied, we had nothing to do. The court had made everything plain for us.

On hearing a bill of exceptions to the verdict thus rendered, the court promptly overruled all the points of law.

The court also denied to the defendant an opportunity of showing to them that three of the jurors, before they were empanelled, manifested strong feelings, and had made use of vindictive and hostile expressions against him personally, after the defendant had established, by his affidavit, the fact that he was not informed of this hostility of feeling and expression before they were empanelled, and with regard to two of them, before the verdict was rendered. The defendant expected to prove, by twelve witnesses, that one of these jurors had expressed a wish to have the defendant put to death, and had declared, shortly after the verdict, to a person inquiring the result, that he had convicted the defendant, and that this was what he intended to do; that another juror had also declared that the defendant ought to be executed; and that the third had frequently made the same declaration, with a wish that he might be permitted to do the work of an executioner, or to shoot him as he would a serpent, and put him to death.

Nor would the court permit the defendant to show by proofs which he declared, on oath, to have been unknown to him at the time of the empanelling of the jury, that an array of twelve men, summoned on venire by a deputy sheriff were, or a considerable part of them, at least, the same persons who had been selected by an attorney of this court, who assisted the officer in the service of the summons.

These, and other matters which I will not stop to enumerate, show that this trial, which has been carried through the forms of law, was destitute of the reality of justice, and was but a ceremony preceding conviction. That there is any precedent for it, in the most acrimonious period of the most excited party times in this country, I am not aware from any examination or recollection of its political history.

In a trial of an alleged political offence, involving the feelings of the whole community, and

growing out of a condition of affairs which placed the whole people of the State on one side or the other of an exasperated controversy, the strictest and most sacred impartiality should have been observed in the most careful investigation, both of law and fact, by the jury, and in all the decisions and directions of the court. In what case should they have been more distrustful of the political bias of their own minds, more careful in all their deliberations, more earnest in the invocations of a strength above their own, that they might not only appear to be just, but do justice in a manner so above all suspicion, that the defendant, and all these with whom he is associated, might be satisfied that he had had his day in court; and that every requisition of the law had been observed and fulfilled? In how different a spirit were the proceedings of this trial conducted? And with what emotions must the defendant have listened to the declaration of one of your honors, that "in the hurry of this trial," they could not attend to the questions of law, which he so earnestly pressed upon their immediate consideration as vitally important to the righteous determination of his case?

The result of this trial, which your sentence is about to proclaim, is the perpetual imprisonment of the defendant, and his seclusion from the face of society, and from all communication with his fellow men.

Is it too much to say, that the object of his political opponents is the gratification of an insatiable thirst of revenge, rather than the attainment of legal justice? They are also bent upon his political destruction, which results from the sentence of the court, in the deprivation of his political and civil rights. They aim also at a social annihilation, by his commitment to that tomb of the living, from which, in ordinary cases, those who emerge are looked upon as marked and doomed men, to be excluded from the reputable walks of life. But there my opponents and persecutors are destined to disappointment. The court may, through the consequences of their sentence, abridge the term of his existence here; they can annihilate his political rights; but more than this they cannot accomplish. The honest judgment of his friends and fellow-citizens resting upon the truth of his cause, and faithful to the dictates of humanity and justice, will not so much regard the place to which he is consigned, as the causes which have led to his incarceration within its walls.

Better men have been worse treated than I have been, though not often in a better cause. In the service of that cause I have no right to complain that I am called upon to suffer hardships, whatever may be the estimate of the injustice which inflicts them.

All these proceedings will be reconsidered by that ultimate tribunal of public opinion, whose righteous decisions will reverse all the wrongs which may be now committed, and place that estimate upon my actions to which they may be fairly entitled.

The process of this court does not reach the man within. The court cannot shake the convictions of the mind, nor the fixed purpose which is sustained by integrity of heart.

Claiming no exemption from the infirmities which beset us all, and which may attend us in the prosecution of the most important enterprises, and at the same time conscious of the rectitude of my intentions, and of having acted from good motives, in an attempt to promote the equality and to establish the just freedom and interests of my fellow-citizens, I can regard with equanimity this last infliction of the court; nor would I, even at this extremity of the law, in view of the opinions which you entertain, and of the sentiments by which you are animated, exchange the place of a prisoner at the bar for a seat by your side upon that bench.

The sentence which you will pronounce, to the extent of the power and influence which this court can exert, is a condemnation of the doctrines of '76, and a reversal of the great principles which sustain and give vitality to our democratic republic, and which are regarded by the great body of our fellow-citizens as a portion of the birth-right of a free people.

From this sentence of the court, I appeal to the people of our State and of our country. They shall decide between us. I commit myself, without distrust, to their final award. I have nothing more to say.

### SENTENCE.

Chief Justice Durfee, after a few remarks, in which he observed that the matters stated by the prisoner had all been considered by the court; that the court had been swayed by no political motives, and had been governed in their proceedings by the law of the land; and that, in consequence of the terms of acquaintance which had existed between himself and the prisoner, he now discharged with regret this last duty which the law imposed upon him; then said: Listen, Thomas W. Dorr, to the sentence of the court which is, "THAT THE SAID THOMAS W. DORR BE IMPRISONED IN THE STATE PRISON, AT PROVIDENCE, IN THE COUNTY OF PROVIDENCE, FOR THE TERM OF HIS NATURAL LIFE, AND THERE KEPT AT HARD LABOR, IN SEPARATE CONFINEMENT."

Mr. Atwell then moved the court to suspend the execution of the sentence, in order to await the decision of the case, upon writ of error, by the Supreme Court of the United States. The defendant would be disabled, by the imprisonment which the sentence imposed, from the prosecution of his suit.

The court replied that they had no power to suspend the execution of the sentence; and it only remained for the officer to carry into effect the judgment of the law.

The prisoner was then remanded, and was removed by the sheriff on Thursday afternoon from the county jail in Newport, and committed to the State prison, in the county of Providence, pursuant to sentence.

"Of the right of a majority of the whole people to change the government at will, there is no doubt."—J. Wilson, Judge of the Supreme Court.

## A GLANCE AT TEXAS.

BEING A BRIEF SKETCH OF HER HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, POPULATION, CLIMATE, SOIL, PRODUCTIONS, AND EXTENT OF TERRITORY; TO WHICH ARE ADDED, A REVIEW OF THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE ANNEXATION OF TEXAS TO THE UNITED STATES, AND A STATEMENT OF THE REASONS IN FAVOR OF THE SAME.

BY THOMAS J. MORGAN.

[Continued.]

### PRODUCTIONS OF TEXAS.

Scarcely a species of timber grows in the United States which may not also be found in Texas, besides others which are here rarely or never met with. Live oak, white, red, and black oak, abound there in great abundance. In 1837, President Houston, in his message to the Texian Congress, observed that four-fifths of all the live oak in the world are to be found in Texas, and at that time estimated the value of this timber (then wasting from want of men and money to transport it to market) at five millions of dollars. Hickory, wild cherry, walnut, elm, mulberry, yellow pine, red cedar, pecan, lime, gum, poplar, China tree, sycamore, sassafras, holly, and the musquit tree, are also common in the republic.

Grapes of the best qualities—the yawpin, the leaves of which furnish a tea, little, if any, inferior to the China article—indigo, cayenne pepper and tobacco, are also indigenous to the soil of Texas. Indigo, to the value of three hundred thousand dollars, was annually exported from Vera Cruz, prior to the Texian revolution.

Cotton and sugar are the staples of Texas at the present time, and will continue to be, unless the policy of the United States forces the republic to rely upon her own resources for the supply of all her wants. She can produce every staple article of the north, but it will be more profitable to Texas, to confine her attention chiefly to southern products, unless compelled, in self-defense, to pursue a contrary policy. It is conceded that Texian soil produces better cotton and more sugar than any part of the United States. The celebrated writer, MARRYATT, a Captain in the British Navy, in his book called "A Diary in America," says that, "In the southern portion of America, there are millions of acres on which cotton can be successfully cultivated, particularly in Texas, the soil of which is so congenial that they can produce one thousand pounds to the four hundred pounds raised by the people of the United States, and the quality of the Texas cotton is said to be equal to the finest Sea Island. It is to Texas, particularly, that we [England] must look for this produce."

Rice is also cultivated in Texas and coffee may be produced in abundance. Wheat, barley, rye, and oats grow luxuriantly in the hilly districts of Texas. Corn will there yield more to the acre than in any of the States. Irish and sweet potatoes grow in the greatest profusion. Holley mentions that five hundred bushels of sweet potatoes are produced to the acre. Lemons, oranges, clives, prunes, figs, peaches, and numberless other fruits can be raised in Texas in the utmost abundance. In a word, nothing grows upon the West India Islands which may not also be cultivated in Texas. The dahlia, fly, geranium, violet, a great variety of roses, and an endless number of other choice flowers are indigenous, and may be found wild upon her soil.

Salt and honey are found in inexhaustible quantities.

### HORSES, CATTLE, HOGS, AND SHEEP.

The climate of Texas is peculiarly adapted to the rearing of horses, and every description of cattle. No greater attention is devoted to them in winter than in summer. They are their own providers throughout the year. The farmers neither stack up hay nor lay away fodder for winter use, the meadows and prairies furnishing nutritious pasturage in endless profusion. One person in Texas can, and frequently does, own thousands of cattle. His only trouble consists in branding them when yearlings, and driving them to market, or the slaughter pen, as may be required.

The Texian horse is not, generally, equal to the northern horse in size and appearance, but more resembles the Canadian pony. He is easily kept, exceedingly hardy, and capable of enduring great fatigue. Large droves of them are to be found in the western and northwestern sections of Texas. The country already contains considerable numbers of swine, which subsist (year in and year out) without a cent's expense to their owner. Sheep are not yet numerous in Texas, although the hilly and mountainous regions are well adapted to their rearing.

### WILD GAME AND FISH.

The buffalo was not long since found in droves of thousands in the interior of Texas. Multitudes still remain beyond the settlements, but their number is rapidly decreasing. At one glance hundreds of deer may be seen grazing upon the same prairie. They will continue in abundance for many years to come. Bear meat is not an unusual dish in many parts of the territory. Wolves, although somewhat troublesome to the farmer's pigs and sheep and poultry; are not dangerous to man. The raccoon, fox, opossum, squirrel and rabbit, add to the sport of the huntsman. Wild cats are occasionally met with, but the panther is seldom seen. The number of wild turkeys, geese and ducks, is incalculable.

Excellent fish, of almost every variety, are to be found in the rivers of Texas, and delicious oysters may be readily gathered from the bay of Galveston.

### THE BEAUTY OF TEXAS.

"The most prolific imagination can scarcely conjecture the beauty, the grandeur, yea, the sublimity of Texian scenery. Its description has been attempted by others, and their testimony is both ample and striking. Read the glowing language used by the discoverers of Texas in 1685. In their joy they exclaim: 'A most delicious country—fertile—beautiful prairie, covered with grass and flowers—vast meadows, and most delightful champagne country—dry, pure, elastic air—springs of sweet waters—clear and rapid streams—no swamps

—abundance of buffalo and deer." In such colors was Texas painted, more than one hundred and fifty years ago, and later writers do not detract from the brilliancy of the tints in which it was portrayed by its enthusiastic discoverers.

Edwards says, on page 49, that, "The scenery of the country is grand and beautiful: here a romantic dell—there an enchanting alcove—and yonder a picturesque cascade, surrounded by the wood and the vine, in view of the rich glen, and limpid brook which bends and curves from its vicinity. Enthusiasm kindles around the pen when it would attempt to describe such scenes, as must forever beggar the master's pencil, and must be visited to be known, as no words can do justice to their appearance."

The eloquent Holley speaks thus: "The displays of vegetable nature in Texas are profuse, various and valuable, presenting, on one hand, the stately and magnificent forest, and again delighting the eye with the rich and splendid scene of the luxuriant prairie, garnished with an endless variety of beautiful and fragrant flowers, making a landscape of indescribable and surpassing loveliness. It would be an elysium for the florist and the poet. One feels amid such scenes, as we suppose Adam to have felt when in the infancy of nature, and every object bore the impress of its Maker, he was made the first and sole tenant of Eden, and left to commune with and contemplate the wonders of creation. Omnipotence has consecrated here, in the bosom of nature, and under Heaven's wide canopy, a temple to receive the praise and adoration of the grateful beholder; and cold and reckless must be that soul from whose sensibilities no responsive homage could be elicited by such an exhibition of the power and beneficence of the Creator. Methinks the veriest infidel would be compelled to bow and mingle in that worship, which, amid the profound, but expressive stillness of the scene, creation seems to pay."

The above description may seem the production of an enthusiast, but in referring to it, Kennedy says: "The colors are glowing, but, according to my own impressions, I cannot say that the picture is over-wrought." It is not here designed to convey the impression that the young republic is a Paradise, or that sickness never reaches its inhabitants, or that every acre of its soil is wondrously rich and ten feet in depth, or that a cold wind never sweeps from the north, or that many a rogue may not be found within its limits; but upon all these points reference is made to the general character of each respectively.

The fame of Texas has spread throughout Christendom, and the common judgment of all acquainted with the capacities of that country, sanctions the description thus hastily sketched. Read the testimony of the most distinguished statesman in England, and probably in Europe.—Lord Brougham uses the following language in a speech recently delivered in the British Parliament: "The importance of Texas could not be overrated. It was a country of the greatest capabilities, and was in extent full as large as France. It possessed a soil of the finest and most fertile character, and it was susceptible of producing all tropical produce, and its climate was of a most healthy character."

Entertaining such an opinion of Texas, it is not strange that ambitious England should strive to grasp the young republic within her clutch. HENRY CLAY'S OPINION OF THE VALUE OF TEXAS.

In the House of Representatives of the United States, on the 3d of April, 1820, Mr. Clay delivered an eloquent speech upon the Spanish treaty, and in opposition to transferring Texas to Spain. In that speech he gave the following description of Texas.—[See Greeley's life and speeches of Clay, Ap. pp. 12 and 13, vol. I.]

"All the accounts concur in representing Texas to be extremely valuable. Its superficial extent is three or four times greater than that of Florida.—The climate is delicious; the soil fertile, the margins of the rivers abounding in live oak; and the country admitting of easy settlement. It possesses, moreover, if I am not misinformed, one of the finest ports in the gulf of Mexico. The productions of which it is capable are suitable to our wants. I am not disposed to disparage Florida, but its intrinsic value is comparatively less than that of Texas." [The purchase of Florida, according to Mr. Clay's speech, cost the United States twenty or twenty five millions of dollars—five millions paid in cash, and fifteen or twenty millions of debts relinquished by our government.]

### TEXAS WAS ONCE OUR OWN.

Startling as may be the assertion to one not acquainted with the fact, it is nevertheless strictly true, that all the vast territory of Texas, with all her rich soil, her delicious climate, her beautiful rivers, her spacious bays, her flowery meads and verdant hills, was once all our own.

In 1803, during Mr. Jefferson's administration, the United States purchased from France, the entire territory then known by the name of Louisiana. What is now called Texas was included in this purchase, as Louisiana extended westward to the Rio Grande. This fact is incontestably established by official evidence from Jefferson, Monroe, J. Q. Adams and Andrew Jackson.

### HENRY CLAY SAYS THAT TEXAS WAS THE PROPERTY OF THE U. STATES.

The following is an extract from the speech delivered by Mr. Clay in the House of Representatives, April 3, 1820.—[See Greeley's life and speeches of Clay, vol. I, Ap. p. 12.]

"I presume the spectacle will not be presented, of questioning, in this branch of the government, our title to Texas, which has been constantly maintained by the Executive for more than fifteen years past, under three several administrations. I am at the same time ready and prepared to make out our title, if any one in the House is fearless enough to controvert it."

In Mr. Clay's letter to the editors of the National Intelligencer, dated April 17, 1844, he refers to this speech, and says: "I expressed the opinion